

THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALIZATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF PARALLEL INSTITUTIONS IN DELIVERING THE SERVICES DURING THE REGIMES OF TDP AND YSRCP IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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After the 73rd CAA, the Panchayat Raj Institutions in Andhra Pradesh faced many ups and downs due to the non-devolution of powers, diverting funds, political authority, and reforms initiated in governance. Instead of strengthening the PRIs, the state has acted as an agency by creating Parallel Institutions to deliver services at the village level rather than democratic decentralization through people's participation. This paper attempts to discuss the democratic decentralization process of Andhra Pradesh during the last seven decades and also discuss the emergence of Parallel Institutions at the village level during the regimes of TDP and YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh.
Keywords: local governments, Panchayat Raj Institutions, 73rd CAA, Parallel Institutions, Democratic Decentralization, public service delivery

Introduction:

According to the 2011 census, there are 6, 49,481 villages in India i.e. 833.1 million of the total population is approximately 68.84 percent live in villages. The remaining 377.1 million of the population approximately 31.16 percent live in cities¹. Due to the independent nature of village, Gandhi stated that the village is the ideal place to live and also proposed the concept of *Gramaswaraj* for the village's social, political and economic development through *self-reliance* and *self-rule*². But the impact of politics on contemporary rural society in India is very high. Therefore, like central and state governments, the local governments also play a vital role in village self-governance and in providing services to the people. This section explains village governments' evolution from Pre-Independence to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1992 including various important committees trying to strengthen PRIs in India.

Evolution of Local Governance in India:

Prior to independence, governance in India began at the village level. The basis is that we have clear evidence that self-government took place during the Chola period. A village is a group of houses, and it is a place where people of different professions, different castes and different tribes live together³. The village is considered a small, self-sufficient, self-financing enterprise and collect the taxes for village development like provision of irrigation water for agriculture, digging of canals and manufacture

of agricultural implements in the village. But the gram panchayats played an essential role not only in collecting taxes and also resolving disputes among the villagers. *Sir Thomas Munro* has treated the Panchayats as a recognized method of resolving disputes at the village level in India. However, the role of panchayats in the villages was greatly diminished by the establishment of courts and police stations during British rule. Nevertheless, the existing panchayats were inhabited mainly by upper castes and the rich. The other villagers acted accordingly to them⁴.

Local bodies were first established in India in 1869. However, the members of these organizations were nominated by the government. By a resolution of the British Government of India in 1882, it began to develop *talukas* and *local bodies* to ensure public participation in government. The first attempt to establish village institutions was made in Bombay in 1889. The Royal Commission of 1909 and 1918 began implementing the Montague Chelmsford Report. Accordingly, a law was passed during 1919-1926 that allowing the establishment of gram panchayats in all the provinces. Firstly agriculture, education, medicine and health services were brought under the purview of the gram panchayats⁵. Due to the colonial rule, these gram panchayats did not make progress and not even one-tenth of the entire villages came under the purview of the panchayats. After independence, the Government of India authorized every village in the state to have one panchayat and to provide